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Letter dated 13 December 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 4 December 1996, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Osman Ertuğ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 12 December 1996 from Mr. Osman Ertuğ
addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 21 November 1996 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations which contains allegations regarding "violations of the airspace of the Republic" (A/51/687-S/1996/963).

I would like to recall that previous similar allegations regarding so-called "airspace violations" were rejected in toto in my successive communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 22 October 1996 (A/51/551-S/1996/873). Since the present Greek Cypriot charges are no different or more credible than the ones previously made, they do not merit a detailed reply. I wish to reiterate briefly, however, that flights within the airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State over which the usurper Greek Cypriot regime in the South has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever.

The aim of the Greek Cypriot administration in making these allegations is, as I have repeatedly pointed out before, to uphold the myth that it has sovereignty over the whole island and to provide a smokescreen for its intensive militarization campaign, coupled with its rejection of direct negotiations. As part of the implementation of the so-called "joint defence doctrine" with Greece, the Greek Cypriot side has recently stepped up its policy of escalation. Referring to the recent visit to South Cyprus by the Greek Defence Minister, Mr. Akis Tsohatzopoulos, the Greek Cypriot daily, Filelefθeros, of 23 November 1996 reported that "net decisions have been taken for the extension of the joint defence doctrine". Subsequent reports in the Greek Cypriot press and the joint press conference held by Greece's Defence Minister and his Greek Cypriot counterpart, Costas Iliades, on 24 November have revealed that among these "net decisions" are the following:

(a) The Greek Cypriot rearmament programme for the period from 1997 to 2001 will amount to a staggering 1.25 billion Cyprus pounds (1 Cyprus pound equals approximately 2.2 United States dollars);

(b) The Greek Cypriot administration will purchase S-300 long-range missiles. The procurement of CSS-6 and CSS-7 medium-range missiles is also envisaged;

(c) Greek Defence Minister Tsohatzopoulos has pledged that in 1997 Greece will establish, using refuelling and AWACS planes, an "aerial bridge" between Crete and South Cyprus. According to Tsohatzopoulos, this will become possible next year, upon the completion of the airbase being constructed for the Greek Air Force in Paphos, South Cyprus;

(d) With the support of Greece, the present air unit of the Greek Cypriot National Guard will be upgraded to the level of a fully equipped air force. The

Greek Cypriot arsenal will include attack helicopters, Mirage 2000 and Tornado warplanes, as well as Mirage F1 pilot training planes.

Furthermore, the Greek Cypriot daily, Filelefttheros, of 3 December 1996 reports that the Greek Cypriot administration will be purchasing 40 new T-80 tanks and that an additional 1,500 professional soldiers will be hired from Greece to serve in the Greek Cypriot National Guard.

I trust that the parties that are interested in a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus question will call upon the Greek Cypriot side to desist from its militarization campaign, which undermines prospects for a peaceful settlement. The other side must come to realize that the interests of the two peoples in Cyprus lie in negotiating on the basis of the existing parameters for a peaceful solution, and not in pursuing a policy of escalation and adventurism.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Osman ERTUĞ
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus